

UDO ADVISORY GROUP

Review of Module 2

The UDO Advisory Group met on Wednesday, March 2, 2010, at 4:00 p.m. in the Urban Design Center, Raleigh, North Carolina, with the following present:

UDO Advisory Group

Linda Edmisten
Phillip Poe
Isabel Mattox
Rodney Swink
Tommy Craven
Tyler Toulon
Brian O'Haver
Bob Mulder
Ted Van Dyke
Mike Munn
Eric Braun
Bob Mulder
Jeffrey Leiter

Staff

Christine Darges
Travis Crane
Greg Hallam
Walt Fulcher
Eric Hodge
Ken Bowers

Consultant

Lee Einsweiler
Colin Scarff

Presentation of Module 3

An overview of the Code Studio presentation to the City Council presentation on March 1 was summarized. The topic of Design Review as it pertains to quality development was determined to be addressed after the text is adopted and not incorporated into the document at this stage. As this item is not part of the work scope, this topic will be discussed as a side conversation over the next few months. The City Council requested that the Advisory Group come to a CC meeting on the project status.

The items on the Advisory Group agenda were discussed:

1. Urban frontages and application of tree conservation. For certain urban frontages, tree conservation would be moved from the street to the other parts of the site to allow the urban form to occur.
2. Parking lot plantings, perimeter planting widths and island sizes. The minimum width of planting would not be 5', but rather the 6' or 7' for parking and edge areas. Street yard would be included in the street cross sections. Islands are not changing substantially. In urban areas, street walls are more appropriate.

3. Parking regulations – the recommendations are a blend of the NN study in conjunction with some recommendations from Fuss and Oneil.
 - Downtown – blended rate was increased from 1 per 400 to 1 per 500. Maintenance of the 10,000 square foot exemption can work to allow reuse of buildings and tenant spaces. Residential, apartments, students, etc...
 - On-street
 - Shared parking are permitted to be entertained as alternates such as ULI and other mechanisms
4. Use of “*buffers*” and where they apply. Understanding difference with transitions.
 - The buffers are linked back to the table of permitted uses. Landscape regulations in general will be similar to the current regulations.
5. Treatment of bio-retention devices compared to retention and detention devices. Regs are state driven and very suburban. Amenities require more discussions with staff will continue.
6. Location of managed and undisturbed open space for single family lots. Violations are continuing to occur for both tree conservation and stormwater open space where homeowners don't realize they are buying property with restrictions so close to the building location.
7. Street typologies and relationships to context /relationship to frontages. New hierarchy will be changed. New names will be designated and context based. Wider streets will need to be incorporated into the palette of streets. There is heavy emphasis on the street trees being located behind the curb instead of behind the sidewalk.
8. Ideas on retrofitting streets. Most likely existing streets won't change, but the streetscape can be amended over time. These are streetscape plates and there may be some choices for the developer. Should the base sidewalk width be increased from 5-6'? Existing adopted streetscape plans will still apply such as in the Downtown and the PBOD.
9. Fee in lieu options for streetscapes – the idea of fee in lieu is good when portions of a streetscape are incremental and construction is not preferred; however, the cost of putting the streetscape is usually not covered with a fee option.
10. Alternates to standards – currently, there is discussion about alternates. For landscaping, if we can achieve in the text what the purpose of landscaping is, then the alternates can be approved administratively. Otherwise, the alternate would go to the Board. The criteria for alternates is a continued discussion topic.

Discussion

Concern from several members of the group was voiced about the timing and mapping strategy for the project. Not having enough time is a concern. The adoption of the text in advance of the mapping was discussed and a map with the base districts will be available during the review of the text. The adoption of the text first allows the districts and new code to be available for use. Yes, there will be two codes applicable for a period of time; however, the old code will be discontinued once the new map is adopted, with a targeted date for public hearing in the Spring of 2012. The original work scope does not include a mapping project. The consultant's workscope and schedule would require an amendment with possible changes to the project cost if a simultaneous mapping was considered. This would require CC approval. There is remaining concern that the timeline is accelerated and too fast; however, an specific time needed to complete the review was not determined. There was a question about the text containing the right tools and not having enough time to see if the tools are right. Testing is important.

The question of getting NCDOT input on placing trees behind the curb was asked. Wade Walker has been working with NCDOT on new cross sections with trees located in a different area.

The idea of public vs. private streets is one that is being talked about, especially with the maintenance issues. The movement is to take the barriers away that discourage the use of private streets.

The group talked about how to proceed and get on the CC agenda for an update. The group talked about what message they want to send to the Council. If an alternative path is recommended, an alternate plan needs to be presented by the Advisory Group. It's important to have a consolidated draft to be reviewing so the public can start looking at the text. The timeline and combining the text and map are the areas of concern. Continue to work toward working on the consolidated draft for the April 6 public comment release date and the staff will work to get the "urban form map" ready with the base districts but with no frontages. Establishing criteria is necessary to determine how and where frontages are applied.

Staff will present a recommendation on group breakouts for the 4 chapters.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the UDO Advisory Group the meeting adjourned at approximately 6:25 p.m.